

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 134346
ORIGIN AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARA-10 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15
CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-01 /059 R

DRAFTED BY AF/C:WLSWING
APPROVED BY AF/C:LDJUNIOR
-----121794 260413Z /20
P 260303Z MAY 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA PRIORITY

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE STATE 134346

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: SOPR, CG, US

SUBJECT: WHITE HOUSE NEWS CONFERENCE - MAY 24

1. FOLLOWING ARE PERTINENT EXCERPTS FROM WHITE
HOUSE NEWS CONFERENCE OF MAY 24:

2. QUOTE. Q. ARE YOU ABLE NOW TO RECONCILE THE
GOVERNMENT'S POSITION ON THE EXTENT OF CUBAN INVOLVE-
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CUBANS TRAINED AND EQUIPPED THAT EXPEDITIONARY FORCE,
WHETHER CUBAN MERCENARIES WERE ACTUALLY IN SHABA
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3. MR. POWELL: I AM IN A POSITION--THERE IS NO
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4. Q. STRIKE THE WORD MERCENAIRES; REGULAR TROOPS.

5. MR. POWELL: -- WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT, SO FAR AS
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AT THE TIME. SINCE THAT TIME, I HAVE GONE BACK BOTH

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IT IS BASED UPON INFORMATION THAT IS CONSIDERED TO
BE HIGHLY RELIABLE. IT IS, IN ADDITION, SUPPORTED

BY A WHOLE SERIES OF REPORTS OF VARYING DEGREES OF RELIABILITY, BUT ALL OF WHICH ARE CONSISTENT WITH THAT CONCLUSION. AND WE DO STAND BY THE STATEMENT. AND I KNOW OF NO --

6. Q. THE STATEMENT IS THEY WERE CUBAN-TRAINED AND EQUIPPED, BUT THERE WEREN'T CUBANS IN SHABA PROVINCE. IS THAT RIGHT?

7. MR. POWELL: I HAVEN'T GONE BACK TO READ THE EXACT WORDS. THE STATEMENT WAS WE HAD NO CONFIRMATION OF CUBANS ACTUALLY BEING IN ZAIRE AND INVOLVED IN THE FIGHTING. HOWEVER, WE DID HAVE INFORMATION THAT THE CUBANS HAD BEEN INVOLVED RECENTLY IN THE TRAINING OF THE KATANGANS AND THAT THEY WERE EQUIPPED WITH SOVIET AND EAST EUROPEAN WEAPONS.

8. Q. BY SAYING THERE IS NO CONFIRMATION, DO YOU SUGGEST THERE IS STILL AN OPEN QUESTION? ARE YOU PREPARED TO SAY AT THIS POINT THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THEY WERE INVOLVED IN THE FIGHTING?

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11. MR. POWELL: I CAN SAY THAT THE MOST RECENT HIGHLY RELIABLE REPORT UPON WHICH MY COMMENT AND THE COMMENTS IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT WERE BASED WAS RECEIVED LAST WEEK, AND THAT AN ADDITIONAL AND SEPARATE REPORT WHICH IS CONSISTENT AND CONFIRMS THAT FROM AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT SOURCE HAS BEEN RECEIVED OVER THE PAST COUPLE OF DAYS.

12. Q. MY QUESTION WAS NOT THE TERM "RECENT" AS TO WHEN YOU RECEIVED YOUR REPORTS, BUT RATHER YOU SAID THEY WERE TRAINED RECENTLY BY CUBANS. DO YOU KNOW WHEN THEY WERE TRAINED? DO YOU HAVE AN IDEA?

WAS IT A MONTH AGO OR SIX MONTHS AGO?

13. MR. POWELL: I'M NOT GOING TO TALK ABOUT THAT.
YOU CAN ASSUME I'M NOT TALKING ABOUT 9 MONTHS OR
A YEAR AGO, OR EVEN 6 MONTHS AGO.

14. Q. CAN WE ASSUME THOSE REPORTS YOU RECEIVED
DISCUSSED CURRENT ACTIVITY?

15. MR. POWELL: YES.

16. Q. NOT HISTORY.

17. MR. POWELL: YES.
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18. Q. SO IN OTHER WORDS, WE ARE UP WITHIN 6 MONTHS.

19. MR. POWELL: YES.

20. Q. EARLIER TODAY YOU WERE QUOTED ON AP AS
SAYING THAT ADDITIONAL MILITARY SUPPORT FOR ZAIRE
IS BEING CONSIDERED. COULD YOU ELABORATE ON THAT
FOR US?

21. MR. POWELL: THERE ARE DISCUSSIONS UNDER WAY
ABOUT THIS TOPIC. I CAN'T GO BEYOND --

22. Q. WHAT TOPIC?

23. MR. POWELL: THE QUESTION OF ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE.

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26. Q. THE QUESTION WAS MILITARY AID.

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\$17-1/2 MILLION THE OTHER DAY WAS FOR NONLETHAL AID.

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Q. NONMILITARY AID.

Q. THE ONLY REASON I BRING THIS UP IS WHETHER THERE IS A DIFFERENCE IN NONLETHAL AND LETHAL UNDER CONSIDERATION NOW.

29. MR. POWELL: THIS DOESN'T INVOLVE A DEPARTURE, SO FAR AS I KNOW, FROM WHAT HAS BEEN DONE IN THE PAST. IT WOULD BE IN THE SAME VEIN AS WHAT WE ARE DOING HERE.

30. Q. DID I UNDERSTAND YOU CORRECTLY TO SAY A COUPLE OF MONTHS AGO THAT THE PRESIDENT HAS NOT MADE A DECISION ON WHETHER HE WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE CLARK AMENDMENT REPEALED OR IN SOME WAY CHANGED?

31. MR. POWELL: THAT IS CORRECT.

32. Q. THAT IS NOT WHAT YOU SAID YESTERDAY. YOU SAID YOU JUST COULDN'T TALK ABOUT --

33. MR. POWELL: I DIDN'T REALIZE WHAT YOU WERE GETTING AT. I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT MR. PINCUS WAS UP TO. AND AFTER REALIZING WE WERE OFF INTO THE WILD BLUE YONDER, I DECIDED TO CHECK WITH HIM AND MAKE SURE.

34. Q. THAT IS ONE OF THE THINGS YOU --

35. MR. POWELL: I THINK I AVOIDED ANSWERING THE QUESTION AND SAID YOU COULD TAKE YOUR CHOICE.

36. Q. THE PRESIDENT ASSISTED IN THE RESCUE OF THE WHITES IN ZAIRE, BUT THERE IS NOTHING SAID HE ASSISTED IN THE RESCUING OF ANY BLACKS FROM THE REBELS. HOW CAN HE EXPLAIN THIS TO THE BLACKS IN AMERICA AND AFRICA, THAT HIS HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY EXTENDS TO BLACKS?

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37. MR. POWELL: I DON'T BELIEVE OUR STATEMENT APPLIED TO BLACKS OR WHITES. I FRANKLY DO NOT KNOW IF THE AMERICANS --

38. Q. THE PAPERS SHOWED NOTHING, ONLY SHOWED THE WHITES.

39. MR. POWELL: I SUGGEST YOU TAKE YOUR COMPLAINTS TO THE NEWSPAPERS. I NOTICED THAT, TOO, THAT THE EMPHASIS WAS ENTIRELY ON THE RESCUE OF THE WHITES. OUR STATEMENT WAS THAT WE WERE CONCERNED ABOUT AMERICAN NATIONALS AS WELL AS THE NATIONALS OF OTHER COUNTRIES WHO HAD ASKED FOR OUR ASSISTANCE. I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THE COLOR OR THE RACE OF THE AMERICAN NATIONALS. WHETHER SOME OF THEM WERE BLACK OR NOT, I DO NOT KNOW. DO YOU?

40. Q. NO. I'M ASKING DO YOU KNOW OF ANY? BECAUSE I HAVEN'T SEEN ANY REPORTS THAT ANY BLACKS WERE RESCUED. DO YOU KNOW OF ANY?

41. MR. POWELL: I FRANKLY DON'T KNOW WHO THE AMERICANS WERE, WHETHER THEY WERE BLACK OR WHITE. BUT IT DOESN'T MAKE A HILL OF BEANS.

42. Q. DO YOU KNOW IF ANY BLACKS WERE RESCUED AT ALL?

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44. Q. IT IS AN ISSUE WITH THE BLACKS. MAYBE IT IS NOT AN ISSUE WITH YOU.

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45. MR. POWELL: WHAT IS THE ISSUE?

46. Q. NOTHING SHOWS THAT ANY BLACKS WERE RESCUED FROM THE ATTACK OF THE REBELS, NOT ANY IN THE NEWS MEDIA.

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Q. ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT BLACK ZAIREANS?

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MR. POWELL: I'M NOT AWARE THERE WAS ANY REQUEST FOR US TO EVACUATE THE CIVIL POPULATION OF ZAIRE, IF THAT IS WHAT YOU ARE ASKING ABOUT. I THINK TO TRY

TO TURN THIS INTO A RACIAL ISSUE IS -- I DON'T KNOW
IF ANY OF THE SEVERAL HUNDRED AMERICANS WHO WERE
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THEY WERE AMERICAN NATIONALS. NOR DID IT MAKE ANY
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CUBANS TRAINED THE CATANGANESE REBELS, DO YOU HAVE
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52. DECONTROL ON RECEIPT. ENCRYPTED FOR TRANSMISSION. VANCE

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ORIGIN ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /015 R

66011
DRAFTED BY ARA/CCA:WSSMITH
APPROVED BY ARA/CCA:WSSMITH
-----128068 261847Z /47
R 261822Z MAY 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USINT HAVANA

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FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 134346 ACTION KINSHASA MAY 26.

QUOTE IMITED OFFICIAL USE STATE 134346

E.O. 11652:N/A

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52. DECONTROL ON RECEIPT. ENCRYPTED FOR TR TRANSMISSION. VANCE
UNQUOTE VANCE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS CONFERENCES, BRIEFING MATERIALS, INVASIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE134346
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Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780513/aaaaakyj.tel
Line Count: 605
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Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
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Message ID: 92cdb695-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
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Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
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Review Event:
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Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2547604
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: WHITE HOUSE NEWS CONFERENCE - MAY 24
TAGS: SOPN, CG, US, CU
To: KINSHASA
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/92cdb695-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
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